

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 PRS-01 H-02 SSM-05

PA-02 USIE-00 AID-05 IGA-02 SY-05 MCT-01 INR-07 SSO-00

INRE-00 /074 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:EOJONES:RGH

APPROVED BY NEA/P:EOJONES

S/PRS - MR. FUNSETH (INFO)

H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)

IO/UNP:MR. PECK

IO/P - MR. BLACHLY

SSM - MR. MC ANDREW

NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH

NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER

NEA - MS. GRIFFIN

----- 031244

O 222144Z SEP 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
USMISSION SINAI
INFO CINCEUR

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GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL, CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - SEPTEMBER 22

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR
SEPTEMBER 22, 1976:

SPOKESMAN: AID ADMINISTRATOR PARKER AND ISRAELI AMBASSA-
DOR DINITZ WILL SIGN THREE AGREEMENTS AT 3:00 P.M. THIS
AFTERNOON PROVIDING A TOTAL OF DOLS 75 MILLION IN GRANTS
AND LOANS TO HELP ISRAEL BUY INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL
COMMODITIES AND RELATED SERVICES FROM THE UNITED STATES.
THE CEREMONY WILL TAKE PLACE IN ROOM 5942.

UNDER SECRETARY HABIB TESTIFIED TO CONGRESS YESTERDAY THAT
THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL HAS NOT RAISED OBJECTION TO THE
PROPOSED SAUDI ARABIAN ARMS SALES. MR. HABIB HAS ASKED
ME TO SAY THAT HE WAS MISINFORMED. THE ISRAELIS HAVE
INDICATED THEIR OBJECTION TO THE SALE.

Q. THAT PHILIP HABIB THING --
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A. YES.

Q. HAS HE SENT A CORRECTION TO THE SENATE FOREIGN
RELATIONS COMMITTEE? WHAT IS BEING DONE ABOUT THAT?

A. I DO NOT KNOW. I AM SURE THE APPROPRIATE CORRECTION
WILL BE MADE. HE WAS SIMPLY MISINFORMED AND HE FOUND OUT

ABOUT IT AND WANTED ME TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT.

Q. WHAT ABOUT THE PLO?

A. WHAT ABOUT THE PLO?

Q. ARE WE LOOKING INTO THE FUND-RAISING?

A. THE INVESTIGATION ON THE POINT THAT WAS RAISED TWO DAYS AGO IS STILL UNDER WAY. YOU SAW THE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION.

Q. YOU ARE SAYING THAT THE INVESTIGATION IS STILL UNDER WAY?

A. YES. THE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION RAISED --

Q. YOU SEEM TO HAVE ANSWERED THAT IN THIS ANSWER THAT YOU POSTED: "WE ARE NOT AWARE THAT THE PLO ATTEMPTED TO RAISE FUNDS."

A. THAT IS CORRECT. BUT THE INVESTIGATION IS CONTINUING TO SEE IF THERE IS ANYTHING WE ARE NOT AWARE OF.

Q. THIS PREDATES THE INVESTIGATION, IN EFFECT.

A. NO, SIR.

Q. THIS IS THE RESULT OF THE INVESTIGATION TO DATE?

A. NO, SIR, IT IS NOT. IT IS NOT. IT SAYS WE ARE NOT AWARE AT THIS TIME. BUT AS I STATED IN OUR BRIEFING A COUPLE OF DAYS AGO, THERE IS AN INVESTIGATION UNDER WAY
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TO DETERMINE IF THERE IS SOMETHING THAT AT THIS MOMENT WE ARE NOT AWARE OF. I THINK I MADE THAT CLEAR ON MONDAY.

Q. HAVE YOU ASKED MR. ANDERSON, COLUMNIST ANDERSON, FOR THE PROOF HE SAYS HE HAS OF THIS LETTER OR THANK YOU NOTE ON THE EMBASSY PAPER, OR THE PAPER OF THE PLO AT THE UNITED NATIONS?

A. I DO NOT KNOW.

Q. HAVE WE ASKED -- HAVE WE BEEN CHECKING WITH THE MISSION IN NEW YORK ABOUT THIS?

A. I KNOW THAT IO HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE MISSION IN NEW YORK, YES -- THE BUREAU, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZA-

TIONS -- YES, THEY HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH. BUT THE DETAILS OF WHAT THEY ARE SAYING TO USUN, I REALLY DON'T KNOW.

Q. THE STATE DEPARTMENT IO OFFICE --

A. YES.

Q. -- IS NOT IN TOUCH WITH THE PLO OFFICE BUT WITH THE UN IN NEW YORK, IS THAT RIGHT?

A. YES.

Q. AND THE UN IN NEW YORK, THE SECRETARIAT, IS TALKING TO THE MISSION.

A. I KNOW WE HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH WITH THE UN SECRETARIAT. BEYOND THAT, I REALLY CANNOT FILL YOU IN ON THE PARTICULARS OF HOW THE INVESTIGATION IS TAKING PLACE, BUT IT IS BEING PURSUED.

Q. WILL YOU GIVE US SOME DETAILS MAYBE TOMORROW ABOUT THE INVESTIGATION OF THE PLO? DID THE UN SECRETARIAT CHECK WITH THE MISSION? HAVE WE ASKED ANDERSON FOR A COPY OF THE LETTER THAT HE SAID HE HAS, AND SO ON? THIS IS A SERIOUS MATTER, AND IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE TONE OF THE STATEMENT THAT WAS PUT OUT ON THE BULLETIN BOARD YESTERDAY

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SEEMED TO KISS OFF THIS THING AND SAYS, "OH, WELL, SO WHAT? WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANYTHING."

AREN'T WE BEING SOMETHING LESS THAN SERIOUS ABOUT THIS?

A. THAT WAS NOT MEANT TO BE THE TONE AT ALL. WE ARE QUITE SERIOUS ABOUT IT. I AM CHECKING EVERY DAY ON THIS QUESTION. I DO NOT KNOW WHAT DETAILS I WILL BE ABLE TO GET FOR YOU ON THE INVESTIGATION, BUT I WILL LOOK INTO IT.

Q. YOU ARE NOT TELLING US MUCH, IF YOU CAN'T ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS TODAY.

A. AN INVESTIGATION IS STILL UNDERWAY. IT IS STANDARD PRACTICE HERE NOT TO TALK ABOUT PARTIALLY COMPLETED INQUIRIES.

Q. WELL, WHO ELSE IS LOOKING INTO THIS BESIDES IO?

A. THEY ARE THE ACTION OFFICE.

Q. TO ASK YOU AN OLD QUESTION, BUT JUST TO KEEP UP TO

DATE: HAVE WE BEEN DOING ANYTHING MORE WITH THE PLO BESIDES THE COMMUNICATION ON TERMS OF SECURITY FOR THE THREE OFFICERS WE HAVE IN BEIRUT?

A. THE ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION IS NO. OUR POSITION WITH REGARD TO THE PLO REMAINS UNCHANGED.

Q. THAT IS TO SAY, WE ARE NOT DOING ANYTHING MORE THAN THAT. CAN YOU TELL US HOW WE ARE MAKING THIS COMMUNICATION? IS IT BY TELEPHONE, PERSONAL CONTACT, CONVERSATIONS?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO GET INTO DETAILS OF HOW SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS ARE HANDLED.

Q. HAS THERE BEEN ANY DEVELOPMENT -- OR MAYBE THIS WAS ANSWERED WHEN I WAS GONE -- ABOUT THE MURDERS OF THE AMERICAN DIPLOMATS IN BEIRUT, THE AMBASSADOR?

A. I HAVE NO RECENT REPORT ON THIS. ACTUALLY, THE UNCLASSIFIED

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QUESTION HAS NOT BEEN RAISED DURING YOUR ABSENCE, TO MY KNOWLEDGE.

Q. PERHAPS YOU CAN SEE IF THERE HAVE BEEN ANY DEVELOPMENTS AT ALL.

A. LET ME CHECK INTO THAT.

Q. DO WE RECOGNIZE THE PLO ON A DE FACTO BASIS, NOW, OR DO WE STILL THINK IT IS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION?

A. OUR POSITION WITH REGARD TO THE PLO HAS NOT CHANGED.

Q. WELL, IS IT TERRORIST?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO REITERATE THE POSITION OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ON THIS SUBJECT. I THINK IT HAS BEEN GONE INTO AT CONSIDERABLE LENGTH ON MANY OCCASIONS, AND I AM GOING TO REAFFIRM THAT OUR POSITION ON THE PLO HAS NOT CHANGE.

Q. ARE YOU SIMPLY NOT SAYING IT BECAUSE YOU DON'T HAVE

THE WORDS UP THERE AND YOU DON'T WANT TO FREE LANCE ON IT, OR ARE YOU DOING WHAT OFTEN HAPPENS, REFUSING TO RESTATE IT, BUT STILL SAYING IT EXISTS?

A. I AM CHOOSING TO STATE THE ANSWER IN A FASHION THAT IS APPROPRIATE.

Q. CAN YOU REFER US TO MATERIAL, OFFICIALLY STATED MATERIAL, ON THE RECORD --

A. UN DISCUSSIONS, SPEECHES.

Q. -- ON WHETHER OR NOT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS THE PLO A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION OR DOES NOT CONSIDER IT A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION?

A. I WOULD REFER YOU TO SPEECHES AT THE UNITED NATIONS, DISCUSSIONS THERE, DEBATES, AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF THE UNCLASSIFIED

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SECRETARY OF STATE.

Q. BUT GIVE ME ONE PRECISE FINAL STATEMENT OF SOME KIND. I WILL WAIT UNTIL NEXT WEEK, OR AFTER THE NEW YEAR.

A. I WILL HELP YOU GO THROUGH THE LIBRARY.

Q. AND DO YOU CONSIDER THAT OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PLO IS DE FACTO RECOGNITION OF THE PLO, IF NOT DE JURE?

A. THE ANSWER TO THAT IS NO, AND I WILL REITERATE THAT OUR POSITION WITH REGARD TO THE PLO HAS NOT CHANGED. I DO NOT INTEND TO SAY ANY MORE THAN THAT.

Q. THANK YOU. HABIB

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE235146
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EOJONES:RGH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760358-0571
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760931/aaaabagt.tel
Line Count: 310
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 FEB 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 FEB 2004 by MaustMC>; APPROVED <11 JAN 2005 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - SEPTEMBER 22 FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR
TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, US
To: BEIRUT
TEL AVIV
MULTIPLE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

